

A PLAN OF ACTION

A Two Year Strategy



Herndon, Virginia

Developed for the Citizens We Serve

**Adopted
September 10, 2002**

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developed for the citizens
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The Town Council, Planning Commission, and Boards working in concert with our Town employees are dedicated to “enriching the quality of life and promoting a sense of community.” In our efforts to continuously improve and seek opportunities to enhance service delivery, the Town Council and staff management team developed areas for focus and priority. Four goals - presented herein as themes - contain a number of initiatives to be completed as part of a comprehensive effort to advance these goals. Themes and initiatives are as follows.

THEME 1 **VIGOROUSLY PROTECT OUR NEIGHBORHOODS**

Initiative 1A – Develop a More Acceptable Day Laborer Site

The current day laborer site at the 7-11 Store on Elden Street and Alabama Drive is unacceptable. The Town, working with residents, day laborer representatives, interested contractors, and Reston Interfaith, have been trying to develop a better alternative to the current site that will be operated by a non-profit organization. Recently, Reston Interfaith received a federal grant for the next two years to provide a coordinator for the purpose of better organizing the situation.

In the short term, interim sites are currently under consideration and will be given top priority. The possibility of a more appropriate site that is compatible with any neighboring communities and is acceptable to residents, Reston Interfaith, day laborers, and contractors, will be explored.

Selection of a more appropriate site will require consensus among all stakeholders.

In the long term, a new permanent site is under consideration for the Neighborhood Resource Center to replace the current facility which is leased. The new Neighborhood Resource Center site may have the potential to support a staging area for the day laborers, at least in the interim.



Resident and day laborer representatives of the Community Relations Working Group discussed alternative sites at a series of meetings.

Initiative 1B – Improve Programs to Enforce Against Excessive Occupancy of Homes

Excessive occupancy continues to be problematic in several of our older neighborhoods. It results in a compelling sense of disharmony within the neighborhoods and undermines the health and welfare of the children and families living within overcrowded homes. In some cases, homes are rented to a large number of individuals on a “boarding house” basis, a clearly illegal activity.

A rental permit ordinance will be developed to address excessive occupancy. The ordinance will require that homes placed on the market for rental will undergo full code inspection to assure they meet building codes prior to allowing new tenants.

Additionally, the Town Manager and Council will investigate the financial feasibility of a two-year dedicated enforcement team composed of the necessary multi-disciplines whose primary mission will be to research, investigate, and eliminate excessive occupancy.

The current investigation and enforcement procedures utilized by the Town will be evaluated and re-engineered to provide a swifter, more proactive enforcement program and data bank. The program will be considerate of privacy and property rights, remain respectful, yet seek to enforce neighborhood protection in a focused, deliberate manner.

Initiative 1C – Develop Neighborhood Investment Zones

The recommendations of the Neighborhood Investment Leadership Team - constituted under former Mayor Thomas Davis Rust - will serve as the foundation for a more focused, financed, and participatory program to aid and empower homeowner associations and neighborhood organizations to achieve neighborhood improvements. Restoring homes, landscaping, and yard grooming will foster pride and a renewed sense of being in control within our neighborhoods.

The program, already successful, will be enhanced via home improvement loan programs, lease-to-own strategies, housing surveys, and neighborhood inspections. Consideration of a future neighborhood “scorecard” will be undertaken as the program matures and performance standards are developed. Successful examples will be publicized to encourage continued neighborhood improvements and to recognize neighborhood leadership.



This home is one of 23 that have been renovated since 2000 through the Town's housing rehabilitation program operated by the Neighborhood Resources Office.
(Printed with owner's permission)

Initiative 1D – Develop Infill Ordinances to Complement the 2010 Comprehensive Plan

The top priority under this initiative will be to design and legislate zoning ordinance revisions to tackle the current trend of demolishing smaller homes in the older subdivisions and replacing them with two and three-story single family homes more than twice the size of the previous home. This ordinance revision will limit infill height, size, and finished grade to that exhibited by the existing neighborhood.

Long-term infill planning and design will be accomplished via comprehensive planning followed by needed changes in residential zoning ordinances.

Initiative 1E – Enforce Compatible Neighborhood Redevelopment

The current consolidation and re-subdivision of spacious older neighborhoods result in greater densities that are generally incompatible with the goal of neighborhood conservation outlined in the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Under this initiative, re-subdivision resulting in higher densities will be controlled by enforcement of stronger zoning ordinances.

THEME 2

ADVANCE THE DOWNTOWN PLAN

After work efforts by the Central Herndon Commission in 1985 and the Main Street Action Plan Commission several years later, the 1989 Downtown Plan was approved. More than \$15 million of public funding has been invested since then and excellent progress has been achieved to redevelop the downtown. Further redevelopment and progress will be encouraged through additional comprehensive planning strategies and proactive economic development.



The Herndon Municipal Center Complex was a significant part of public projects totaling more than \$15 million to revitalize the historic downtown.

Initiative 2A – Implement a Renewed Downtown Planning Strategy

In April 2001, residents, business owners, developers, and Town officials held a planning workshop called a Charrette to develop strategies for downtown redevelopment. Based on the three planning alternatives recommended at the Charrette, a practical and clear revised downtown planning strategy was developed.

Initiative 2B - Redesign the PD-MU

The planned development-mixed use (PD-MU) ordinance will be redesigned to empower interested developers to invest in the downtown, while providing for an appropriate mix of commercial, retail, residential, and recreational uses to create a pedestrian and business friendly downtown.

Initiative 2C – Develop a Revised Downtown Public Shared Parking Program

The Town currently offers a public shared parking program, which provides off-site parking for downtown businesses that financially contribute to the program. Due to escalating land prices, structural parking in the downtown must be considered to expand the public shared parking program to foster further redevelopment and provide adequate public parking.

THEME 3 STRENGTHEN STRATEGIC FOCUS

Given the myriad of activities and services required of Town staff, it is normal that day-to-day work efforts focus almost entirely on urgent issues, routine business, and crisis management. In very busy environments, this situation is very typical but usually results in a reactive environment, loss of the “big picture,” and missed strategic opportunities.

In order to strengthen strategic focus it is very important for the work team to accomplish services and tasks at the appropriate level within the organization. Through proper delegation, training, and empowerment, management can turn to the work team to accomplish the bulk of services and tasks. It is very important, therefore, for the staff management team and the Town Council to “get out of the trenches” and spend more time and resources focusing on major programs and strategies. To do so it is imperative that the work team is well trained, empowered, and has a very strong bias for quality and detail. Independence from management making most decisions must be the new paradigm.

Initiative 3A – Develop a High Performance Team Environment

The Town must continue to provide outstanding customer service delivery and remain “light on its feet.” Continued focus on the key attributes of a quality team environment must be embraced throughout the organization and leadership must come from everyone. Key attributes involve the following:

- shared goals and objectives;
- distributed decision making;
- proactive conflict management;
- agreed protocols and procedures;
- training and development; and
- recognition and praise.

Given proper training, on-the-job development, and empowered delegation, areas of authority (boundaries) for each employee can expand. This renewed “responsible freedom” environment will help our Town maintain high - if not the highest - service delivery in Northern Virginia.

Initiative 3B – Develop an Ad-Hoc Human Resources Committee

Under this initiative, representatives from the Town Council will be appointed to work with representatives of the work team to investigate and recommend improvements to the work environment reward system (pay-for-performance), benefit package and other areas of interest relating to our most valuable resource, our employees.



Through on the job development and recommendations of the ad-hoc Human Services Committee, the work team will continue to provide superior customer service.

Initiative 3C – Reinforce the Town’s Pay-for-Performance System

The current pay-for-performance system has a track record of success and serves to motivate our work team. However, continued assessment of the pay-for-performance system will be encouraged and revisited by management staff and Council.

Initiative 3D – Maintain the Proactive Outreach Programs of the Police Department



A graduating class of the Herndon Youth Police Academy.

The current partnering that exists between the Herndon Police Department and the community through community policing initiatives - such as Neighborhood Watch, Crime Prevention Education, Herndon Police Citizens Support Team, Crime Prevention Council, Citizen and Youth Police Academy, and Police Explorers - must be embraced and retained. These programs serve as a model for community involvement. Working with the Herndon Police, the Town Council will be supportive of conducting focus meetings on an as-needed basis to address critical public safety issues.

Initiative 3E – Encourage Focus Meetings Involving Town Council to Address Major Issues/Strategies

The Town Council has a rich and successful history of working as a “committee of the whole.” Such a philosophy has helped the Town Council maintain teamwork and avoid turf ownership. This philosophy will continue.

Given the heavy workload and challenging customer service expectations from the citizens we serve, Council work sessions tend to be time consuming and long. This leaves little time to fully focus on strategic opportunities. Accordingly, use of additional “focus meetings” to address major policy issues and strategies will be encouraged and supported on a case-by-case basis.

THEME 4 ENHANCE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Herndon is basically sound and well managed. We have a strong history of sound investments, thorough budgeting, and responsible spending. Given the expanding capital improvement program, high service delivery expectations of residents and the complexities introduced by new regulations and technology, Herndon must continue to remain efficient yet proactive.

Initiative 4A – Develop an Ad-Hoc Finance Committee

Under this initiative, representatives of the Town Council will be appointed to work with representatives of the work team to investigate and recommend improvements to the Town’s revenue sources (taxes, fees, and charges for services) and internal control environment. In addition, the ad-hoc committee will function as an oversight committee for the Town’s annual financial audit



Staff from the Department of Finance prepare for the annual financial audit.

Initiative 4B – Enhance Economic Development

Working with the Herndon Dulles Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Business Coalition, and the Fairfax County Department of Economic Development, marketing opportunities and competitiveness for our businesses will be improved. This will require exploring business partnerships and participating in state and county-sponsored advertising to promote the Herndon marketplace. An in-depth business analysis of Town policies that regulate and impact businesses will be conducted to enhance marketing strategies. To strengthen our opportunities for success, community stakeholders and Fairfax County will be encouraged to support our economic development efforts.



The Herndon marketplace will be promoted to improve opportunities and competitiveness for our businesses.

Initiative 4C – Improve the Budget Approval Process

It is the consensus of Council to start the budget approval process earlier and to address three separate budget categories: Human Resources, Capital, and Operations. There will be opportunities for Council as a group to review the budget with staff at special work sessions devoted to each category (separate from regular work sessions). Individual Council member/staff work meetings - as requested by each member of Council on an as needed basis - will be encouraged.

